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INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION IN THE PEACEFUL USES OF OUTER SPACE

Implementation of the recommendations of the Second United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space

Report of the Secretary-General

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INTRODUCTION

1. The General Assembly, in its resolution 46/45 of 9 December 1991, requested the Secretary-General to report to the Assembly at its forty-seventh session on the implementation of the recommendations of the Second United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space. 1/

2. In response to that request, the present report provides information on the progress made in the implementation of the recommendations of the Conference.

3. The Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, its Scientific and Technical Subcommittee and the Working Group of the Whole to Evaluate the Implementation of the Recommendations of the Second United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space considered the question of the implementation of the recommendations of the Conference during their 1992 sessions. Accordingly, the information contained in the present report reflects primarily the result of the work of the Committee, whose report is also before the General Assembly. 2/

II. WORKING GROUP OF THE WHOLE TO EVALUATE THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE SECOND UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON THE EXPLORATION AND PEACEFUL USES OF OUTER SPACE

4. The Working Group of the Whole was reconvened by the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee at its 1992 session in accordance with General Assembly resolution 46/45 to continue its work.

5. At its 1992 session, the Committee endorsed the recommendations of the Working Group of the Whole as contained in its report (A/AC.105/513, annex II), and recommended that the Working Group of the Whole be reconvened in 1993 to continue its work.

III. INTER-AGENCY COOPERATION

6. In paragraph 18 of its resolution 46/45, the General Assembly requested all organs, organizations and bodies of the United Nations system and other intergovernmental organizations working in the field of outer space or on space-related matters to cooperate in the implementation of the recommendations of the Conference. In that connection, the Committee noted with appreciation the participation in all stages of its work and that of its Scientific and Technical Subcommittee by representatives of United Nations bodies, the specialized agencies and other international organizations.

7. United Nations bodies and specialized agencies, particularly the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the Food and Agriculture Organization of

the United Nations (FAO), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), the World Meteorological Organization (WMO), the International Maritime Organization (IMO) and the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), have extensive space-related programmes that are contributing to the implementation of the recommendations of the Second United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space. Details of these programmes can be found in the yearly reports of the Secretary-General on coordination of outer space activities within the United Nations system. The latest report (A/AC.105/491) contains an overview of the agencies' work programmes for 1992 and 1993.

8. The fourteenth session of the Inter-Agency Meeting on Outer Space Activities is scheduled to be held in October 1992 at UNESCO headquarters in Paris.

IV. STUDIES

9. In response to the requests of the fifth session of the Working Group of the Whole, the Secretariat prepared and submitted to the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee at its twenty-ninth session, in 1992, the following reports and studies: "The applications of space technology for integrated land and water resources management for rural development" (A/AC.105/490), "Applications of space technology to the study of desertification in developing countries" (A/AC.105/501), "Report of the Secretariat in response to the request of the Working Group of the Whole to Evaluate the Implementation of the Recommendations of the Second United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space" (A/AC.105/504) and "International cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space - activities of Member States" (A/AC.105/505 and Add.3).

10. The Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, in endorsing the recommendations of the sixth session of the Working Group of the Whole, noted that they called for the preparation of further studies and reports of relevance to the recommendations of the Second United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space.

11. In addition, and in accordance with the recommendations of the Working Group, the Secretariat will also be preparing for submission to the 1993 session of the Subcommittee the following reports and studies: a report containing information from Member States on their national and cooperative international space activities, on their space activities subject to greater international cooperation, on their resources and technological capabilities in the fields of space activities for the promotion of cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space, on safety of nuclear power sources (NPS), on NPS-debris collisions and on their national research on space debris as well as technical studies on remote and rural area communications and broadcasting; forest resources management; ocean resources development and low-orbit communications satellites. (See also sect. VII, International Space Information Service.)

V. UNITED NATIONS PROGRAMME ON SPACE APPLICATIONS

12. In paragraph 7 of its resolution 37/90 of 10 December 1982, the General Assembly endorsed the recommendations of the Conference that the United Nations Programme on Space Applications should be directed towards seven specific objectives. The activities conducted in 1991 by the Programme and the plans for the period 1992/1993 to meet those objectives are contained in the report of the United Nations Expert on Space Applications (A/AC.105/497).

13. Activities carried out or planned under the Programme in 1992, in cooperation with other United Nations bodies, include the following training courses, seminars and workshops: a United Nations Workshop on Space Technology for Resource Development and Environment Management, co-sponsored by the Governments of Ecuador and Japan; a Second United Nations/Sweden Training Course on Remote Sensing Education for Educators, co-sponsored by the Government of Sweden; a Second United Nations/European Space Agency (ESA)/Planetary Society Workshop on Basic Space Science for Development, co-sponsored by the Governments of Colombia and Costa Rica; an International Conference on Satellite Remote Sensing for Resource Management, Environmental Assessment and Global Change Studies, co-sponsored by the Government of the United States; a Fourth United Nations Training Course on Remote Sensing Applications to Geological Sciences, co-sponsored by the Government of Germany and the Carl Duisberg Society; a United Nations Workshop on Communications for Development, co-sponsored by the Government of the Republic of Korea; and a Seventh United Nations/ESA Training Course on the Use of Remote Sensing Systems in Hydrological and Agrometeorological Applications, co-sponsored by the Regional Centre for Services in Surveying, Mapping and Remote Sensing (RCSSMR).

14. In promoting the development of indigenous capability, the Programme will award 19 long-term fellowships (2 by Austria, 10 by Brazil, 2 by China, 5 by ESA) in 1992 for in-depth training of participants from developing countries in the areas of microwave technology; research and applications in remote-sensing technology; research and training in geodesy, photogrammetry and remote sensing; cartography and aerial photography; scientific instrument manufacturing; theoretical and experimental astrophysics; systems and methods of space information processing; the Earth's rotation and lithosphere plate movement using space technology; optical-electronic instruments for remote sensing; monitoring of the Earth's resources and its environment; space antennae and propagation; remote-sensing information systems; satellite meteorology; and communications systems. Brazil and China, as well as ESA, have renewed their offer of fellowships for the 1992/1993 period.

15. In 1993, the following training courses, seminars, conferences and workshops are planned:

(a) The United Nations Seminar on Communications for Development, for the benefit of countries in the Mediterranean and adjacent areas, organized in cooperation with the Government of Greece, to be held at Athens;

(b) The United Nations Workshop on the Use of Space Techniques for Monitoring and Control of the Desert Environment for the benefit of member States of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA);

(c) The United Nations Regional Conference on Space Technology for Sustainable Development, for the benefit of member States in the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) region organized in cooperation with the Government of Indonesia, to be held at Bandung;

(d) The United Nations/Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) Space Conference on Africa: Environmental and Natural Resources Information and Africa's Management Needs;

(e) The United Nations/Office of the United Nations Disaster Relief Coordinator (UNDRO) Regional Workshop on Space Technology to Combat Natural Disasters, for the benefit of member States in the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) region, organized in cooperation with the Government of Mexico, to be held at Mexico City;

(f) The United Nations Regional Training Course on Remote Sensing Applications to Geological Sciences for the benefit of the ESCAP region, organized in cooperation with the Government of Germany, to be held at Potsdam, Germany;

(g) The United Nations Training Course on Monitoring Natural and Renewable Energy Resources and the Environment in the Sahel Region, funded by the Government of Italy, for the benefit of French-speaking African countries; the course is being organized jointly with the United Nations Department for Economic and Social Development and organized in cooperation with ESA;

(h) The Third United Nations/Sweden Training Course on Remote Sensing Education for Educators, to be organized in cooperation with the Government of Sweden, to be held at Stockholm and Kiruna.

VI. TECHNICAL ADVISORY SERVICES

16. In paragraph 7 (g) of its resolution 37/90 of 10 December 1982, the General Assembly decided that the United Nations Programme on Space Applications should, upon request by Member States or any of the specialized agencies, be directed towards the provision or arrangements for provision of technical advisory services on space applications projects. With regard to that mandate, the Programme has provided or is providing assistance in the following areas:

(a) To the Indian Ocean Marine Affairs Cooperation (IOMAC) Programme, by continuing to assist in the organization of pilot projects in the use of remote sensing for mapping and managing coastal resources;

(b) To the Government of Chile in support of the plans by the Government of Chile to host the Second Space Congress of the Americas, at Santiago, in January 1993;

(c) To the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran for the organization of a seminar on Remote Sensing of the Environment and Earth Resources;

(d) To the Government of Ecuador for promoting regional use of the Cotopaxi Remote Sensing Ground Receiving Station.

VII. INTERNATIONAL SPACE INFORMATION SERVICE

17. In paragraph 8 of its resolution 37/90, the General Assembly decided to establish an International Space Information Service, consisting initially of a directory of sources of information and data services to provide direction upon request to accessible data banks and information sources. With regard to that mandate, the International Space Information Service published the third volume of Seminars of the United Nations Programme on Space Applications (A/AC.105/492), containing selected papers from the seminars, workshops and training courses of the Programme in 1991; Highlights in Space, based on annual reports prepared by the Committee on Space Research (COSPAR) and the International Astronautical Federation (IAF) (A/AC.105/515); an updated version of the Directory of Information Systems on Space Science and Technology (A/AC.105/517); and Space Activities of the United Nations and International Organizations (A/AC.105/521). The Committee noted that the Directory of Education, Training, Research and Fellowship Opportunities in Space Science and Technology and its Applications (A/AC.105/432/Add.1) and the List of Experts in Space Technology and Applications (A/AC.105/460/Add.1) would be updated in 1992-1993.

VIII. VOLUNTARY CONTRIBUTIONS

18. In paragraph 10 of its resolution 37/90, the General Assembly appealed to all Governments to make voluntary contributions, either in money or in kind, towards carrying out the recommendations of the Conference. In his note verbale dated 11 March 1983, the Secretary-General brought that paragraph to the attention of Member States, particularly with respect to the newly mandated and expanded activities of the United Nations Programme on Space Applications. Member States and intergovernmental organizations that responded to the appeal since the forty-sixth session of the General Assembly have been mentioned under appropriate headings in the report of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space. 2/ The Committee took note of the disappointment expressed by the developing countries at the lack of financial resources to implement fully the recommendations of the Conference. It requested the General Assembly to make an adequate budgetary allocation for the Programme.

IX. REGIONAL MECHANISMS OF COOPERATION

19. In pursuance of General Assembly resolution 46/45, the Secretariat continued its efforts to strengthen the regional mechanisms of cooperation in carrying out various activities in the implementation of the recommendations of the Conference, in particular those relating to the United Nations Programme on Space Applications.

20. In accordance with both the recommendation of the Second United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space concerning the development of indigenous capabilities and resolution 46/45, which considered it particularly urgent that, among other things, the United Nations should support the creation of adequate training centres at the regional level, the Secretariat has also continued its efforts, undertaken as part of the United Nations Programme on Space Applications, to establish regional centres for space science and technology education in existing national or regional educational institutions in developing countries. The Secretariat has published a report entitled "Centres for Space Science and Technology" (A/AC.105/498) which summarizes activities undertaken by the Secretariat towards the establishment of the regional centres. It is continuing consultations with regional commissions and countries that have expressed interest in hosting such centres and pursuing the question of the funding for the establishment of these centres in discussions with Member States as well as with UNDP and other regional and international funding institutions.

21. The following 21 countries have offered to host a Centre in their respective region: Africa: Ghana, Kenya, Morocco, Nigeria and Zimbabwe; Asia: China, India, Indonesia, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Malaysia, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and Thailand; Latin America: Argentina, Brazil, Chile and Mexico; Middle East: Jordan, the Syrian Arab Republic and the United Arab Emirates; and Europe: Greece.

22. Following expression of interest by the Government of Spain to support the establishment of the Centre in Latin America and the Caribbean and an offer made by the Government of Canada to support the evaluation process towards its establishment, experts from Canada and Spain as well as the United Nations undertook an evaluation mission in May 1992 to Latin America. Further evaluation missions to other regions will be carried out as soon as funding sources have been identified.

X. OTHER MATTERS

23. Noting a proposal to organize a third UNISPACE Conference in 1995, preferably to be held in a developing country, the Committee recommended that Member States might discuss the possibility of holding such a Conference in the future during its next sessions.

Notes

1/ See Report of the Second United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, Vienna, 9-21 August 1982 (A/CONF.101/10 and Corr.1 and 2).

2/ Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-seventh Session, Supplement No. 20 (A/47/20).